

Stark, Colleagues Write To Senate And House Leaders On Ethanol

Sunday, 28 October 2007

Representatives Stark, Butterfield, Inslee, and Gillibrand lead 42 of their colleagues in sending a letter to House and Senate leadership urging inclusion of environmental safeguards in ethanol production mandates.

MEDIA ADVISORY, Monday, October 29, 2007

CONTACT: Yoni Cohen, Stark (202) 225-3202

STARK, COLLEAGUES WRITE TO SENATE AND HOUSE LEADERS ON ETHANOL

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Representatives Pete Stark (D-CA), G.K. Butterfield (D-NC), Jay Inslee (D-WA), Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY) and 42 of their colleagues in the House of Representatives today sent the following letter to Senate and House leaders. The letter expresses Representative Stark's opposition, on environmental protection and food security grounds, to a significant increase in the amount of corn-based ethanol that is by law required to be included in gas sold in the United States.

The text of the letter follows. The signed letter is available as a PDF.

October 29, 2007

Honorable Nancy Pelosi

Speaker

U.S. House of Representatives

Honorable Harry Reid

Majority Leader

U.S. Senate

Honorable John Boehner

Minority Leader

Honorable Mitch McConnell

Minority Leader

U.S. House of Representatives

U.S. Senate

Honorable John Dingell

Honorable Jeff Bingaman

Chairman

Chairman

Energy and Commerce Committee

Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Dear Leaders:

As you complete work on energy legislation that will give the U.S. a new direction towards energy independence and help fight global warming, we urge you to consider some concerns when crafting a Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS). We believe that this legislation can advance our nation's energy independence without compounding our hunger and environmental challenges. In particular, we urge you to make the development of bio-fuels from crop wastes, wood wastes, perennial grasses and other non-food crops the centerpiece of a new and expanded RFS, and we further urge you to link incremental increases in bio-fuels from both non-food crops and food crops to potential impacts on domestic and international food prices, feed prices, and environmental health.

We have the opportunity to jumpstart the cellulosic industry by making aggressive demands through the RFS and ensuring that we move towards a cleaner transportation system for generations to come. According to the EPA, cellulosic ethanol has an approximately 90 percent lifecycle green house gas emission reduction when compared to gasoline.

As you know, the current RFS has unleashed unprecedented development in ethanol, reducing America's dependence on foreign sources of gasoline. Indeed, the production of ethanol is outpacing the current RFS. Americans have stepped up to this challenge -- new technologies that develop cellulosic biofuels are growing by the week.

Rapid expansion of ethanol made from corn and other food crops has also created new unforeseeable challenges, including rising food prices, rising animal feed prices, heightened competition for water, water pollution, and the loss of grasslands and other valuable wildlife habitats. US food prices have risen well above the Consumer Price Index. Rising crop prices caused in part by the current RFS have contributed to higher consumer prices for staples such as eggs, dairy, and meat. While we support efforts to reduce America's dependence on foreign sources of energy, we are concerned a major increase in ethanol production from food crops such as corn could hurt those Americans in greatest need of assistance and who are least able to weather rising food and energy prices. Any package that is sent to the President must include guarantees for the use of cellulosic fuels within the RFS.

We urge you to craft an RFS that strongly encourages the development of bio-fuels from non-food crops. The development of advanced forms of

biofuels will have a lesser impact on food crops because they have the potential to provide a higher energy yield per acre. Congress should minimize the impact on food prices and the environment by ensuring that high efficiency crops are utilized to fulfill the requirements of any RFS mandated by the government.

We strongly support your efforts to reduce America's dependence on foreign sources of energy and to promote the domestic production of bio-fuels and look forward to working with you to craft an RFS that meets America's energy, economic, and environmental needs.

Sincerely,

/s

Pete Stark

/s

G.K. Butterfield

/s

Jay Inslee

/s

Kristen Gillibrand

/s

Maurice Hinchey

/s

James Moran

/s

Marion Berry

/s

Lincoln Davis

/s

David Wu

/s

Mike Honda

/s

Dennis Kucinich

/s

Zoe Lofgren

/s

Raul Grijalva

/s

Loretta Sanchez

/s

Peter Welch

/s

Diana DeGette

/s

Jim Matheson

/s

Lynn Woolsey

/s

Brad Miller

/s

David Price

/s

Mike Ross

/s

Bennie Thompson

/s

Michael Michaud

/s

Mike McIntyre

/s

James McGovern

/s

Vic Snyder

/s

David Scott
/s

Melvin Watt

/s

Allen Boyd
/s

Adam Schiff

/s

Shelia Jackson-Lee
/s

William Jefferson

/s

Henry Cuellar
/s

John Lewis

/s

Carol Shea-Porter
/s

Grace Napolitano

/s

Heath Shuler
/s

John Spratt

/s

Tom Udall
/s

Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick

/s

Michael Arcuri
/s

Rush Holt

/s

Albert Wynn

/s

Steven Rothman

/s

Edolphus Towns

/s

Bob Etheridge